

15 June 1954

Mr. William D. Pawley
Department of State
Room 4109 New State Building
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Bill:

At the Director's request I have prepared a brief statement on Guatemala suggested for use by the President at his press conference tomorrow morning, June 16th. I am enclosing a copy herewith. The Director has seen and approved this wording. He has talked to Mr. Hagerty in the White House, told him that a brief statement of this character would be submitted and urged that it be used.

Meanwhile, he has asked me to submit it to you for clearance on behalf of the Department. As you are aware, he is in close direct touch with the Secretary concerning events in Guatemala and asked me to suggest to you that this statement be shown to someone in the Secretary's office so as to avoid any possible misunderstanding.

I am writing you this hasty note because I wish to get this into your hands at once and we are both apt to be unreachable by telephone. Needless to say time is of the essence.

Very sincerely yours,

Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
Special Assistant to the Director

1 Encl.

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SUBJECT: Draft of Possible Press Conference Statement on Guatemala

The current crisis in Guatemala grows out of the attempt to convert its communist infiltrated government into an out-and-out communist dictatorship. A few days ago the regime officially announced the suspension of civil liberties and rounded up many prominent non-communists. Now we hear of an order directing that part of the recent shipment of arms from behind the Iron Curtain is to be distributed to communist cadres. Clearly these moves, all too familiar as steps in a communist takeover, are not being made in response to any external threat. The truth is that they are prompted by the increasing awareness of the communist threat and growing anti-communism of the enormous majority of the Guatemalan people and above all of the Guatemalan army. These same circumstances give us reason to hope and expect that the loyal anti-communists in the country will themselves clean their own house.

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